All food was also made up of the 4 elements. Here rice was of particular importance. The body was seen as built and maintained by rice. Flesh in fact was rice, an image probably derived from Buddhist scriptures. 11

Each element carried with it its substantive aspect of heat, flowing, etc., and its astrological nature and relations. Elements could be compatible or incompatible with each other. Earth, water, wind, iron, and wood for instance were compatible. Gold "got along" with all elements. Fire, though, was incompatible with wind, water, and wood for it could destroy their proper proportion.

The effect of astral and planetary relationships at the moment of birth on one's constituent elements induced qualities of character.12 Mind and body were a continuum. Because family members were born at different moments of time, intrafamilial temperamental differences were expected.13 Persons made up of incompatible elements quarreled. Thus friction might occur between parents and children. For a husband and wife, who lived in especially close proximity, the constitutional elements were of special importance. Through marital relationships their elements were in physical contact. Consequently, in the old days, a couple contemplating marriage ascertained through their horoscopes the compatibility of their natal elements to determine whether they could live together without destroying each other. For instance, a girl with much fire in her make-up was easily angered and prone to fevers. She could not make a successful marriage with a boy with much wood.

Physiology

A single physiological process controlled the functioning of the body and the mind; i.e., the equilibrium of its elements. If the elements were in proper balance, proportion or harmony, a person was healthy; if an element were excessive or deficient,

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11. "This, my formed body, is composed of the 4 Elements, generated by Father and Mother, built up from rice, porridge and sour gruel," says the Buddha (Suriyabongse 1961:11).

12. Merit, the other determinant of character, is discussed in "Influences on Health" below.

13. Cf. the proverb "The joints (knots) on the same stem are nevertheless unequally spaced, so even brothers are of different minds," (Gerini 1894:14).

magical formulae and incantations (khāthā cf. Textor 1960:88-98; 67-79). It was one of the branches of occultism (saiyasāt [McF. 1940:895]), the ancient science which sought by magical means to control the forces of the heavens and of earth and to manipulate them in behalf of man's interests and enterprises, whether economic, aesthetic, personal, or other. Some of the other branches were dancing, singing, the agricultural rites, boxing, boat- and house-building, and the life-cycle rites. This powerful wisdom was contained in sacred books at the Buddhist temple where it passed, usually orally, from priest to priest. It could be transmitted away from the temple between men, if they had once been ordained. Its transmission was controlled by ritual teacher-pupil relations, and its use by formal request through presentation of a sacred offering, the khwan khāo (cf. Duan's Tale p.44). Unauthorized magic did not work because it was not validated by its supernatural discoverer; improper ritual behavior incurred strong supernatural sanctions. Instruction in magic and its use was free except for the token offerings and coin in the khwan khāo. The only rigid obligation was a public annual homage-to-the-teacher ritual (wai khrū).

The persons authorized to handle any part of saiyasāt were called mō. In the context of medicine, mō was translated "doctor." To keep the modern and ancient traditions separate, we shall use the Thai word "mō" throughout this paper for the practitioner of the ancient occult art, reserving the word "doctor" for physicians trained in modern medicine.

The field of medicine was split into categories or specialties. There were, for instance, the exorcisers of spirits or disease objects (mō phī), and the curers (mō rakeā) who made up decoctions particularly for element imbalances. Astrologist-foretellers (mō dū) analysed disturbances due to astral confluences; soul-ceremonialists (mō khwan) carried on the khwan-strengthening rites; and the mō sanē specialized in love and hate magic. On a lower plane were masseurs (mō nūat) and midwives (mō tamyae). No specialist could operate in the field of another unless he had formally acquired that specialty. No limits, though, were set on the number of specialties a person might acquire so that all their lives, mō were open to and seeking new knowledge by pilgrimage, discussion, or visit to a Chinese or modern druggist. The major curing specialties were only in the hands of males, but men and women both practiced the minor branches of midwifery and massaging.19

19. A woman medium (khonsong) who cured when possessed by the spirit of a male mō was not entitled to be called mō. Her special circumstances are discussed in "Magic and Maturity."

Influences on Health

In Bang Chan, a discussion of sickness and health merely in terms of element balance would be true but insufficient, or even superficial. After all, whether manipulated by oneself or by a professional curer, elements could only be controlled within certain limits. Far deeper questions were posed, probing the ultimate nature of health, life, and death. What determined the particular proportions of a person's 4 elements with which he had been born, and whether he had, say, a preponderance of wood from Jupiter or gold from Venus? The immediate answer of astrological confluences on the date of birth would be true, for each day had its own qualities and aspects, but it was not enough. Why had he been born on that date to that set of governing factors? In life, why did one person meet the circumstances that created illness, while another lived in glorious health? The answers to these questions must be sought in the Buddhist moral and cosmic beliefs.

The Buddhist universe operated on a principle of immutable law. Each person received his just due, suffering for his own sins, enjoying reward for his virtue. There was no personified deity to help, forgive, or blame. Moreover, attachments were the cause of sorrow. Because existence was fraught with desires, all life was basically painful. Even flashes of happiness by their cessation caused sorrow.

In this universe and on this earth, individuals, each a unique and independent entity, were born to live and die, over and over again, throughout eons of time. They bore no relation to each other. Separate and autonomous, each was in charge of his own destiny. All beings formed a single grand scale of existence from demons in hell, through such lowly creatures as worms and insects, upward through dogs, cats, buffaloes, and elephants to mankind, then on up to angels and gods in the last paradises before the peace of Nipphān (Nirvana).

The insight of the Buddha showed the way to break the sorrowful eternal cycle of rebirth and reach Nipphān. The Buddha perceived that meritorious behavior caused one to progress up this ladder of existence toward freedom from incarnation. In each life merit (bun) could be accumulated by compassionate behavior: caring for priests, and being kind and generous to persons less able to care for themselves. With merit one's next life was happier and freer of restrictions. A dog had more merit than a worm, a buffalo than a dog.

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[278] fast enough to break the amniotic sac. Sāi made her a medicine of mung bean and sugar, both of which wet the uterus, and murmured some magic words to help. Later she worked with her hands at the vagina, twisting the sac a bit to break it. Suddenly the sac ruptured.

Now the child was almost there. The head showed well. Sāi sat down directly in front of Dūan to do the pressing herself. With one hand she held or gently pulled on the baby, with the other she pressed on the abdomen with every [789] contraction. As she started in, she said magic words. She worked for an hour--no midwife would press more than that--until at last the child was out. A little boy! With her finger Sāi removed the blood from his mouth, and pucked out the lips. Breathing was slow in coming, so she shook him vigorously, then laid him down. Quickly she chewed up an onion and spit it over his body. "Ah-h-h!" A cry, though not very strong! Seeing the new baby appear, Chai, who up to then had been constantly near his mother, rushed precipitously from the house, and refused to come in for hours, in spite of Song and Lak's coaxing.

[787] Everyone had observed an auspicious circumstance: the cord was looped around the baby's neck! This imitation of the holy cord (nongkhon) placed around head and neck in Brahman rites of passage was a rare and good sign. "A cord looped thus could never kill a baby," someone said.

Since the placenta was slow in coming, Sāi prepared to cut the cord while Dūan rested and sipped the fiery snake brand medicine. Depending on circumstances she might cut it [278] before or after the placenta was out. Taking a rhizome of phlai (McF. 60), a traditional healing root, she laid it on a clod of soil brought in from outside. From one of the [412] old bamboo house beams, someone had sliced with a knife a sharp-edged, tapering sliver to serve as a cutter. The cord was stroked 3 times, starting near the baby's stomach "to remove the dirt." Then "something that is in the umbilical cord" was pushed back towards the baby's stomach "to prevent [778] a flow of blood." She measured the cord from the baby's abdomen to his knee, and tied off 2 places in it with the holy unspun cotton cord used ordinarily in rituals. Laying the part between the 2 knots on the phlai on its bed of soil, and saying her magic "w'nyān a sam pa nō," she cut [757] the cord with the bamboo cutter. With a chicken feather which had to come "from the mother's yard," she collected a few spider webs from the rafters, mixed them with coconut oil, and painted them around and on the cord-stump, also "to stop the blood-flow." While doing this, Sāi said, "One midwife I know severs the cord by tying it with the thread at 3 places, then burns it with a flame."

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Lek watched over the baby, while Sāi turned towards Dūan. "One looks to the mother first, unless the baby needs help more." First Sāi gave DŪan medicine for the placenta. She rubbed her hands with alum and tried unsuccessfully to work down (klōm) the slippery placenta. Then she told Dūan to get on her hands and knees, and exert all the force she could. DŪan crept around the floor but it still did not come. Sāi then tried hitting Dūan's back 3 times with DŪan's own pillow. Finally she gave DŪan a leaf of betel pepper to chew, hoping to induce a wind-producing nausea and so push out the placenta. In the end DŪan resumed her sitting position and it was pressed out. So the baby would not get pimples, the placenta was cleaned carefully, then put into an old pot, mixed with 2 dishes [751] of salt, and set aside.

While Lek sewed up the partially completed cushion, Sāi laid the baby along her legs, and washed him with soap. Sometimes she washed the baby before the cord was cut, if the placenta came quickly. She used salt to remove the greasy fat from his body, though would have preferred "fermented tamarind to protect him from pustules that enlarge to sores (rōk phuphōng)." "Soft tissue like a stomach covering his head! What a good sign of progress and fortune!" she exclaimed. She powdered him with face powder (dinsōphōng), and painted his abdomen with turmeric,[34] "so wind will not make him cry." Covering him with a little piece of old cloth, she laid him on Lek's old winnowing tray (kradong). [787] [278]

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It was the moment to winnow (rōn) the baby, and link it to home and family. While Lek got the holy unspun cord, others placed on the tray with the baby all manner of traditional things to influence the progress and well-being of the child during his lifetime. Sāi put on the phlai, the clod of soil, and the tapered bamboo she had used to cut the cord "because they will never be used again," but actually these things had a far deeper meaning to all present. Song laid on a school exercise book and pencil, so that his son would have knowledge and a good memory. Mī got a needle for sharp wit. If the baby had been a girl, the needle would have given sewing skills. When all was in readiness, DŪan had to decide on the ones to raise the child aloft, catch the tray as it was dropped, and bless him as the holy thread was tied on. She had to choose these persons carefully, for the child

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34. Other mixtures (used also on the mother) were lime-bergamot lemon; or phlai (if possible the one on which the cord was cut), wānnan (acorus calamus) (Textor:84-86) and mahāhing (asafoetida) with burned betel leaf. These were all to keep out wind.

846 789 782 Now that the fire was going nicely and Dūan was "ready to warm her body," the all-important prayer and incantation "to control the hotness and poison" of the fire had to be pronounced lest the mother's body be "swollen or burned." Sāi took raw rice, salt, and alcoholic liquor[36] in her mouth, chewed them, and sprayed them over the fire and over Dūan's body three times, saying "Spirit of the Fire and Wind, may both mother and baby be cool and happy!" and murmuring her secret formula with ancient Pali words about "great fire" and "death."[37] With the shoulder cloth (sabaichiang) that she always wore to the temple draped diagonally over her left shoulder and under her right arm, Dūan knelt and faced the fire. Praying for happiness to the Mothers of the Fire, Fire-floor, and Wind, and finally to the Lord Buddha, the Holy Brotherhood of Priests, and the Sacred Law, she bowed, hands clasped, and touched the floor three times with her forehead. Then she rose and lay down on the plank with the holy fire on her right side.

846 [757] [853] As Dūan was resting quietly, Sāi made three "taping fruits" (lūk prakhop), balls of tamarind leaves, phlai, and salt wrapped in cloth. One was put well up between Dūan's legs to cure the birth wound (phlēe). The other two were set aside for use on subsequent days. Sāi painted the baby's tongue with alcoholic medicine, and from her fingers dropped a little honey and boiled water into his mouth. Then she laid him on his tray on the floor close by Dūan, on the side away from the fire.

• 787 827 With satisfaction of a job well done, Sāi and Lek sat together for a quiet chew of betel. "Lek," said Sāi, "has it occurred to you on what a good day this boy has been born? It is a Saturday, so he will have power. Nothing, nobody, can hurt him! Once I delivered a boy on that best

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36. Alcohol was heating; rice, strengthening. Salt appears to be drying.

37. The deities addressed were mǣ phra phlōeng and mǣ phra phai. Another Pali-Thai magic formula to control fire was: "Phra Mōk Khan Lē Mō will extinguish the fire from hell, na mō phut the ye." Phra Mogdallana, one of the two most faithful disciples of Buddha, caused the fires of hell to go out (cf. Anuman Rajadhon 1961:137). The na mō...etc. was a traditional phrase to prevent spiritual dangers and is a repetition of the names of the Buddha in five incarnations, past and future (cf. Textor 1960:483-485).

date of all, Sao Hā Day, one Saturday in April, which was the fifth day of the waxing moon of the fifth month, in the year of the Big Snake. That boy is truly blessed. He will be the best and most respected doctor or teacher. He is in school now and people are always telling him he is bright. Chāi came on a Monday, so he'll be charming, but, alas, always roaming away from home! This new little son has his mother's features, which is as desirable as a daughter's having her father's features. Still, no one knows what characteristics come from a parent. One more thing, Dūan. Now you may take medicine as you please." Shortly after, Sāi took leave until the next day.

The new mother turned her face toward the fire and tried to sleep. It was night. Lek was close by, and Song slept in his mosquito net near Chāi's cradle. The fire was so hot it kept waking Dūan. Though the smoke made her eyes smart it kept the mosquitoes away. In spite of the discomfort, Dūan was eager to have the fire as hot as she could stand it, for this heat and that of the medicine would dry her uterus, rid her of the bad blood and waters of childbirth, restore her strength and stimulate her milk. She forced herself to drink as much hot boiled water as possible to keep out the dreaded wind element that might get into her body and cool her. When, however, the fire was overpowering, she dripped water from a handy jar with a cloth.

The next day, Sāi returned. With warm, boiled water she bathed Dūan--this time the upper part of her body also--and the baby. The boiled water was much more important for the mother, but being available, was used for the baby, too. Sāi washed the soiled clothing and the baby's little cloths. Turmeric was again painted on both Dūan's and the baby's abdomen, head, and neck to protect from wind. Sāi questioned and examined Dūan. Measuring a handspan down from Dūan's groin, she pressed outward gently. "I want to see if these particular ligaments on the thigh are joined. They are often damaged and do not heal if the time by the fire is too short. Some mothers cannot walk at all. They have to call a masseur for regular treatment." To "make the ligaments well," she tapped Duan's body all over with the second of the tapping-fruit balls and had her sit on one while bathing. She massaged the muscles, stiff from lying quietly near the fire, by pressing in the ball with her hands and even feet. Medicinal herbs were warmed and laid on Dūan's breasts so that the "useless early milk [colostrum] which would give diarrhea" could be worked out and thrown away. "The real milk is not ready for the baby until the third day," Sāi said, "but if the baby is crying much, and if there is milk some mothers start nursing on the second day."

Almost from the moment of his birth, whenever the baby

846 [787] Seven days after the end of the fire period, Dūan sent a message to the mō to look in his book as to what direction from the house she should bury the phlai, the bamboo knife, and the pot with the now dried placenta and cord. She already knew some of the procedure: burying should take place on a Monday or a Friday; south was right during the first three months of the lunar calendar, November, December, January; and the full moon of the twelfth month (October) was especially good, for the moon waned thereafter. Chāi had been born in October, so north was right for him, but for a girl it would have been east. Song or Lak or anyone could bury the pot, but most mothers did it themselves. If it were buried in the wrong direction, the baby would die, and if not under a tree, he would leave them and their home, and roam. The instructions came. With the things in her hand, she walked toward a big jackfruit tree. Beside it was a sakāe. Either was good, so she chose the sakāe which, being nearer the house, might strengthen by that much the roots that would keep her boy at home. After burying the pot and all, she returned directly to the house, remembering to pick, as she came, a fruit, a vegetable, a leaf, and then a piece of wood, all useful things. In the house she added them to the usual household stores. By doing so, and by using them up shortly, she ensured that her new son would be a good worker, who on returning home would always bring something to add to the requirements and wealth of the household. Once buried, the placenta, "like ashes," was ignored and the spot forgotten.

846 262 [461] [753] [757] 862 Within a month after childbirth, Dūan was back at farm work, even to the back-straining pounding of rice in the big mortar. For three months she avoided fruits, particularly guava and jackfruit. Then, since the baby was thin, she gave up vegetables, especially gourds, corn, and the green plants that grew in the canal. One day, because she carelessly ate some salted field crabs, the baby got thrush on its tongue. They cured him by smearing the milky juice of a peel of kluāi nam banana on the cloth sheet covering his cushion, then wiping this on his tongue (cf. Anuman Rajadhon 1961:153). So the year passed, and then another. Not long after his third birthday, Dūan realized she was pregnant again, so took steps to wean him. She painted her nipples with "black medicine" (yā dam), a bitter and hot tasting ointment made from the boraphed rhizome (McF; 474). Then she sent the child over to her mother's older sister's house for four nights. To make quite sure, she followed an old ritual way, too. She boiled an egg hard and peeled it. Holding the egg behind her back, she turned her face away from her son, and handed it to him behind her so that she could not see his face. "Henceforth, you shall not nurse any more," she said. Without looking at him, she walked

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A major clustering of first experiences, and so of habit formation, was in intra-uterine existence. Every experience of the mother was shared by the fetus. After birth, a baby daily formed habits of eating, sleeping, and crying, and later, as a child, habits of respect, obedience, truth-telling, etc. To create good habits efforts were bent to control and ameliorate any first experience: to make it as correct as possible; to seek out favorable astrological moments; to ask auspicious, skilled, or learned persons to be part of the initial action. An example was the establishment of nursing. When the baby was put to the breast the first time, the objective was not nourishment but to establish a good habit, viz. copious and strong sucking from an ample milk supply. Only after this first nursing did breast-milk as nourishment become important. If on this occasion he did not nurse well, he would have the habit of eating poorly all his life. Moreover, whatever the mother's experience with her first-born, it would not only be repeated every time he nursed, but set the nursing pattern for all subsequent children she bore. For her first-born, though, a mother would have had no previous experience of making milk. She had to be taught, or shown, how to make good milk, just as the baby had to be taught to suck, and later taught to eat rice. Consequently, the first-born baby was almost always first nursed by another person (not necessarily a kinswoman) with copious milk. Then 2 or 3 days later, because the example had been set, good milk came in and the mother started nursing. What was to be avoided at all costs was a first suck of colostrum, which appeared to be "unfit, early milk" from an insufficiently lactating breast. This would be a poor precedent. Until a mother decided her milk was right for nursing, a baby subsisted usually on honey and water, and maybe a little crushed banana. If a woman were not satisfied with her nursing capacities for her first-born child, when the second child was born she might ask another lactating woman to give the baby a first nursing so as to improve her own habit.[42] One woman flatly said her own milk was always unfit as proved by her babies' health, so she used a bottle of (canned) cow's milk from the start. She felt she had the habit

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42. Bradley (79-80) felt that the dehydration attendant on lying by the hot fire significantly reduced the quantity and quality of the milk.

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In addition, strengthening foods like rice and fish, the staples for stout farmers, were stressed. Fruit, "which gave no strength," and vegetables (except for the nursing curry mentioned below) were avoided.

The holy fire also transformed a woman into a better nourisher. It gave her new, lasting beneficial nursing habits. As one man explained, "the very nature of water is changed by boiling over a fire. It becomes suk (ripe)." Similarly, a woman's body, her very nature, was permanently changed to suk by the fire's heating. The fire, in fact, made suk all the food she ate beside it. Since this food was turned into milk, her breast milk became suk and so more nourishing, and did not disturb elements.[52] "Food eaten while lying by the fire, when eaten later on (during lactation) by the mother, does not cause diarrhea in the baby." Jackfruit ordinarily caused wind-trouble during lactation, but one woman ate it during the fire-rest, and at once "got used to it, so she could eat it all the time." To make themselves better nourishers, some women spoke of the desirability of "eating a bit of every kind of food." The "nursing curry" (kaeng lIang) was a mixture of vegetables.

Finally, the consecrated fire strengthened a woman's own khwan. She could better withstand convulsion if attacked by a spirit.[53] She was able thereby to handle a khwan even without the special magic that existed for it.

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52. To be nourishing even the daily rice had to be made suk by boiling (Anuman Rajadhon:77). It may be that no food was considered nourishing unless suk, either naturally (like ripe fruit) or by cooking.

53. "...when 'involuntarily' entered by ghosts...maidens in the 17-25 age bracket tend to convulse more violently than do women of more advanced years"(Textor:406). "Maidens" were presumably not married and so not suk.

562 789 [754] [787] love philters, and they might be "sealed up" in childbirth or attacked by khun, their capacities to "liang" were inalienable. If any woman tried to temper with men's magic, a severe sanction fell on her. She became the host of the phī krasū who lived from faeces like a dog.[59] On the other hand in a legendary case a man who tried to perform one of the women's rites to the Rice Mother was destroyed.[60] Furthermore, the Buddhist sanction of sinfulness fell on any man using magic for evil purposes.

562 791 [755] [793] The single channel where women might operate in the men's field of curing, power, clairvoyance, etc. was as a medium (khon song), through possession by a spirit. If possessed by a male mō, she could do everything a mō could do. Men were never mediums. Bang Chan's only medium was possessed by a male mō.[61] During seances she talked and sat like a man, and gave out cures and advice to an eager clientele. Only while wearing the yellow robe of an ordained priest did a man enjoy a generalized eufunction comparable to a woman's nurturing capacity. His powers in many respects were far greater than hers, but limited in her speical province.

[832] [156] [688] [626] [593] 59 My finding is based on Textor's interesting facts (pp. 305-330). He described the hosts of phī krasū as married women ("never a maiden") in their 30's or 40's, who were "invariably" trying to learn love magic. Such women were, however, violating their sexual function as nurturant and worse, their status as "suk" women, ritually established by the holy fire! Ostracism by the community, implemented by fear of contagion through spittle, lasted even unto the deathbed. The phī krasū's daughter alone was immune while giving the devoted care which was every mother's due in her old age, for Bang Chan desired no alienation of this filial duty even out of fear of the terrible sanction on the mother.

[539] [776] 60. The legend ran that once a man instead of a woman went into the rice field to perform the ritual inviting of the Rice Goddess to stay there and be cared for with food and offerings during her pregnancy. The goddess he met was not an immature and tender child-like spirit, but the adult, pregnant being who was powerful, flirtatious, and frightening. Dazzled by her beauty he fell in love with her, and ran away with her, vanishing forever. The goddess, affronted because an improper person arrived to deal with her, destroyed him.

[825] [787] 61. In Bangkok, monkey, cats, or spirits may also possess women.

759 In these 2 qualifications of skill and success, some of the explicitly non-professional old ladies were recognized as easily matching the professionals. What then was the definition of a professional midwife?

759 789 What the professional midwives alone did was to deliver non-kin, for which they had to have magical formulae and reliable celestial knowledge. The incantations gave a midwife the right to be called a mɔ̄ tamyān, for he or she was using to a greater or lesser extent the sacred wisdom of occultism (saiyasāt). Here midwifery was like any other craft or endeavor. One could cure, sing, and build a boat without magic, but with it, the chances of success and effectiveness were increased. The incantations could "ease delivery," "get a baby out that had died inside"(for this baby could no longer do his part), "prevent the poison of the fire from burning the mother," and give other special help. That this magic was the crucial difference between the professional and non-professional was illustrated by the old lady who had delivered 30 babies, but vehemently[67] denied being a midwife. "I am not a professional. I have no magic. I only pray to the Lord Buddha and think of sacred things each time."

759 • 787 A professional also had more detailed astrological knowledge of the orientations of relevant celestial beings so that delivery would be "helped and not obstructed." This knowledge was in no way a professional secret, but if complications during childbirth were evident, it was necessary to have accuracy, and convenient that the midwife had it.

759 562 212 191 778 To certain villagers the designation "professional" could not be applied to women because, never having been ordained, they had not learned to read, as men supposedly had, not only Thai but Pali and Cambodian, the languages of medical and magical lore. "A professional midwife has a book. No woman can become professional because she cannot read." The idea was that incantations were correct only if taken from the sacred texts at the temple, though in fact the formulae were taught orally. One male midwife had a sacred book in his private possession, which was proper, for sacred books were inherited by males.

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67. Her vehemence may reflect either pride in being so successful without magic--a true lɯ̄ang dī--fear of being reported as unlicensed (see below, p. 145); or consternation lest she be accused of using magic to which she was not entitled.

Attitudes Toward Food

To older Bang Chan residents, to lack rice was to starve even though fish or vegetable fare were at hand. Since rice was the staff of life, many important customs clustered about it. Ceremonies to the Rice Goddess accompanied the raising, selling, and storing of rice. When the unhusked rice was in the bin, it could not be withdrawn at any time as needed, but astrological charts had to be consulted to make sure the day was auspicious. Paddy could never be withdrawn on Friday, a day sacred to the Rice Goddess. After cooking, the best rice was said to be at the mouth of the pot, so this was offered on ceremonial occasions. Important rules were that when cooking rice, the cover of the pot must never be laid in a mortar and it must be inverted, never laid down flat; otherwise one would be short of rice. One must never scrape the top of the rice with the cover, or the "soul" of the rice would be scraped out of the pot. Moslem residents murmured an Arabic prayer every time the rice was put into the pot, and every time the pot was put onto the fire, as well as before eating.

Rice has been generally regarded as the strength-giving food par excellence. A portion of Chutima's (1939) description of the "old system" follows:

> Our children and young women are forbidden by ancient doctrine from eating any fair quantity of animal products, but must eat plenty of rice which is considered as the only true food, the others being only appetizers. And to stimulate the palate, large quantities of hot and irritating condiments (chilies and peppers principally) are consumed at every meal. Some vegetables, boiled or raw, are also included, but in small quantities in spite of abundant supply.

The quotation indicates first that in the past, rice was considered much more important as food than the "with-rice" dishes. Since the Food and Drug Division of the Ministry of Public Health has been attempting to encourage the eating of more "with-rice," the attitudes found in Bang Chan are of interest. One informant stated that only rice can make children fat, and that the "hot taste" foods help them to eat more rice. Another commented that rice makes children strong, and "with-rice" makes them weak. Another, a mother of seven children, said that if babies were given too much "with-rice" they would be potbellied. The more modern view was expressed by an informant who said that a certain child ate only rice with fish, and was weak; he refused vegetables and banana. One affluent farmer, an elderly man whose orphaned grandchild was being raised on cow's milk (evaporated or dried milk, diluted with boiled water) expressed the opinion that the ancient belief was based on thrift. He said that thrifty

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

A Bang Chan employee who walks out on his superior because he does not like the food he is served or a villager who agrees to lend a person money and then is not at home when the person calls for the loan can easily account for his actions by saying that circumstances had changed.

It must be noted, and this is crucial, that there is generally no animosity felt toward the employer with the unpalatable food, toward the fleeing[21] employee, or toward the unreliable creditor. Villagers are thoroughly conditioned to the possibility of such events and accept them simply as part of the inauspicious nature of life. That they are in fact considered inauspicious rather than results of the willful or malevolent intentions of others is not accidental. Bang Chaners faced with a breakdown in the fulfillment of commitments can of course point to the individual who directly caused it. But there is no satisfaction to be gained from this. The person who broke his obligation must have had his own good reason, and beyond this, there were probably other factors, unknown to both parties, that caused the breakdown. For most Bang Chaners, all human intentions are forever set within a framework of cosmic, and particularly moral, unpredictabilities.[22] If things do not work out the way one expects, it is most likely due to the inauspiciousness of the time, place, and persons involved. The proper time is particularly important. It is precisely for these reasons that the more important events in a person's life—marriage, trying to win a lottery or a maiden's heart, taking an important trip—are so often preceded by ceremonial attempts to decide the cosmologically auspicious conditions for effecting the event. These involve consultations with monks, shamans, and other religious practitioners, and highly ritualized forms are followed to select the appropriate conditions. (See Textor 1960 and 1962 for systematic discussions of the various kinds of problems and practices associated with this complex.) The kind of occurrences discussed above are not of this order of significance, but they do partake of the same cognitive assumptions that lead to such highly institutionalized practices. Thus, whereas most Occidentals would point exclusively to the actions of the other person as being both the necessary and sufficient cause of the interactional breakdown, Bang Chaners, who have considerably less confidence in human capacities, would really not be sure. To them, human volition represents only one of several indeterminate and uncontrollable factors giving rise to events. Who knows what accident, change of heart, sudden windfall—particularly one occasioned by something done by one of the parties several lives earlier—might intervene to alter what had originally been planned and agreed upon?

[21] This is just the term that villagers, with their wonderful sense of hyperbole, apply to such cases. The original Thai word is *nii*.

[22] I am indebted to L. M. Hanks, Jr., for suggesting this line of thought.

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[789] 22. Have you consulted with a medium frequently, occasionally, seldom, or never?

1. Frequently	7
2. Occasionally	4
3. Seldom	66
4. Never	856

[775] 23. Have you been disturbed by a ghost frequently, occasionally, seldom, or never?

5. Frequently	6
6. Occasionally	8
7. Seldom	55
8. Never	864

[641] 24.a. Excuse me, could you tell me, who is now the prime minister of Thailand? If you know, could you please tell me his name?

1. Correct answer	193
2. Incorrect answer	89
3. DK, cannot recall	111

b. Excuse me, could you tell me, who is now the chief of police of Thailand? If you know, could you please tell me his name?

4. Correct answer	167
5. Incorrect answer	24
6. DK, cannot recall	142

25.a. IF R LIVES IN BC COMMUNE: Who is the district officer in Minburi? If you know, could you please tell me his name?

1. DA, as from Bangkapi	194
2. Correct name of present DO	9
3. Correct name of past DO	—
4. Incorrect name	16
5. DK, cannot recall	111
— No Answer	3

b. IF R LIVES IN KY COMMUNE: Who is the district officer in Bangkapi? If you know, could you please tell me his name?

6. DA, as from Minburi	141
7. Correct name of DO	19
8. Incorrect name	—
9. DK, cannot recall	154
— No Answer	28

[434] [829] [556] 26.a. Throughout the world and here in Bang Chan-Khanna Yao too, it is common among men that there must be some who are rich and some who are poor and some who are neither rich nor poor. How about you yourself? Are you rich, or poor or neither rich nor poor?

1. Rich	2
2. Poor	68
3. Neither	863

b. IF POOR: Here in BC-KY, do you think there are many or few people who are poorer than you?

5. Many	30
6. Few	31
7. Unascertainable	7

b. And how about mushroom growing? Do you think mushroom growing yields very good money, good money, or little money? [125] [244]

5.	Very good money	68
6.	Good money	160
7.	Little money	49
8.	Unascertainable	56

c. And what about Tilapia. Do you think tilapia raising pays very good money, or good money, or little money? [228]

9.	Very good money	15
X.	Good money	73
Y.	Little money	175
0.	Unascertainable	70

39. Do you believe in nadiums strongly, somewhat, or not at all? [787]

1.	Strongly	12
2.	Somewhat	191
3.	Not at all	105
4.	Unascertainable	84

40.a. Suppose you could do the same work in another rural place and earn ½ more than here. For example, it would be a place 100 kilometers from here. Would you be willing to leave for that place or not? [166]

5.	Yes	118
6.	No	203
7.	Unascertainable	12

b. IF NO: For what various reasons would you not be willing to go?
(See code at end)

41.a. If you had no land to work in K-KY would you move to another place or not?

X.	Yes	164
Y.	No	112
0.	Unascertainable	80
—	No Answer	36

b. IF NO: For what various reasons?
(See code at end)

42.a. Some people say that, generally speaking people who live in Bangkok have more genuine and lasting happiness than people here in K-KY. Do you agree or disagree? [369] [829]

1.	Agree	136
2.	Disagree	136
3.	Unascertainable	49

b. IF AGREE: For what various reasons do you agree?

If Agreement (See code at end)